

Community Series Pt 3 Vertical Pursuit

In today's message I want to begin to lay out Christ Center's CORE Values...**The Presence of God vs. Gods Omni presence**

24 Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?" says the Lord; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the Lord. Jer 23:24

27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. 1 Kings 8:27

God's Word is so clear on why this has got to be the foundation of our Christ Center Family.

Theme verse...64 Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down! That the mountains might shake at Your presence — Isa 64: 1

REASONS WHY "THE PRESENCE OF GOD" HAS TO BE OUR FOUNDATION

1. The "Getting Colder" Factor (Easter egg Hunt) People are searching and their soul is crying out "YOUR GETTING COLDER"

Solomon's search for fulfillment

11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts Eccl 3:11

EXPLORATION

Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever. The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again. All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing. Eccl 1:4-8 -

WISDOM:

I thought to myself, "Look, I have grown and increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge." Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind. Eccl 1:16-17

PLEASURE:

I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. Eccl 2:10

I thought in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good." But that also proved to be meaningless. Eccl 2:1

HUMOR:

2"Laughter," I said, "is foolish. And what does pleasure accomplish?"

ALCOHOL:

3I tried cheering myself with wine, - Eccl 2:2-3

WEALTH:

I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. Eccl 2:7-8

Whoever loves money never has money enough;

whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income.

This too is meaningless. Eccl 5:10

MUSIC:

I acquired men and women singers, Eccl 2:8

RELATIONSHIPS:

King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter-Moabites, Ammonites,

Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. 2They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. 3He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 1 Kings 11:1-4

RELIGION:

He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. 1 Kings 11:4-5

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. Eccl 2:4-6

1. Religious thinkers "The spark of the divine in us"
2. Philosophers called it "The desire of the part to return to the whole." & the insufficiency of all things attainable.
3. The Greeks called it nostos-a homesickness within all of us. Eros-a relentless pull towards whatever we perceive as good.
4. The Vikings called it wanderlust
5. St. Augustine called it "restlessness" "You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in you".
6. U2 phrased it "I Still havent found what I'm looking for"
7. Mick Jagger put it to song "I cant get no satisfaction"
8. It has been called the God shaped hole inside of all of us.
9. I call it the "Getting colder factor"

Lets finish verse 11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, ...except that no one can find out what God has done from beginning to end. Eccl 3:11
Solomon recognized ultimate fulfillment must come from the outside. man can't find it.

Church every person around us aches to have this void filled! We can never forget that!

This is what I meant when I said last week that we can't become so cool we become cold. It won't be our relevance that fills that void it will be the felt presence of God. Not that we shouldn't try to be good hosts and serve others. Ultimately the Church at its best is a conduit of the Felt Presence of God.
As believers we know that this world is unable to ultimately satisfy the longing of our soul. Jesus said that He was the way the truth and the life and no one gets to the father except through Him.

The "Getting Colder" factor is a reason we must have as our deepest CORE value the Presence of God.

Number 2 reason that the Presence of God must be our Deepest CORE value is

2. The Presence of God is what makes us distinct

33 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' 2 And I will send My Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. 3 Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people." 4 And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments. 5 For the Lord had said to Moses, "Say to the children of Israel, 'You are a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and

consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you.'" 6 So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb. *Moses Meets with the Lord* 7 Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the Lord went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp. 8 So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle. 9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. 10 All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man in his tent door. 11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle. *The Promise of God's Presence* 12 Then Moses said to the Lord, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people.' But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.' 13 Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people." 14 And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." 15 Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. 16 For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us how will we be distinct, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth." 17 So the Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name." 18 And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." 19 Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." 20 But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." 21 And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. 22 So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. 23 Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen." Ex 33

Let me ask you a question...

- Would you keep going to McDonalds if they didn't have any beef?
- Would you go to a theatre if all they played were trailers and never a movie?
- How many line up for gas when the tanks are empty?

First things First

30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' **This is the first commandment.** 31 And **the second**, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30-31

19 So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. 20 Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it. 21 And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?" Ex 32:19-21

The antithesis of the Presence of God on the Mountain was the Idolatry at the base of the mountain. All stemming because they sent Moses up the mountain without them.

UNFULFILLED LONGING FOR THE "ETERNAL" LEADS TO IDOLATRY.

12 Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the Lord. 1 Sam 2:12-13

17 Therefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for men abhorred the offering of the Lord. 1 Sam 2:17

22 Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 23 So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. 24 No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the Lord's people transgress. 25 If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the Lord desired to kill them. 1 Sam 2:22-25

1 Samuel 4:1-22; The Israelites were being defeated by the Philistines. The Israelites brought the Ark of the Covenant to battle with the 2 sons of Eli who were ungodly men. (Had a form of godliness but denied it's power) In the middle of the battle the Philistines stole the Ark of the Covenant and carried off Eli's 2 sons, the Ark was a symbol of God's presence with Israel. When he heard about it, Eli, the high priest of Israel was so shocked and grieved he fell and broke his neck, dying immediately. And worse, Eli's daughter-in-law went into early labor due to the shock of the news, dying also, giving birth to a son named Ichabod, which means "the Glory of the Lord has departed."

and that is why ICHABOD was written over ISRAEL.

Lets commit as Christ Followers never to have "Ichabod" written over Christ Center.